



**EMBARGOED TILL 24 JULY 2013**

**National Medical Excellence Awards 2013  
Celebrating the best medical talents**

1. Eight awards were given to outstanding recipients of the 6th National Medical Excellence Awards (NMEA) at the awards dinner held at Goodwood Park Hotel on 24 July 2013. The NMEA is the only award given out by the Ministry of Health (MOH) that recognises contributions from clinicians, nurses and allied health professionals for innovations in healthcare, patient safety, clinical quality, biomedical research as well as training and education of clinicians.
2. This year, the recipients come from a range of disciplines including rheumatology, oncology, hepatology, infection control, paediatric haematology, paediatric cardiology and emergency medicine.

**NMEA 2013 Award Recipients**

*National Outstanding Clinician Award*

4. There are two recipients this year. The first recipient is Professor Fong Kok Yong, Chairman, Medical Board (CMB) of the Singapore General Hospital (SGH). He has made extraordinary contributions in the development of rheumatology in Singapore as well as patient safety and quality care. He established the Autoimmunity and Rheumatology Centre in SGH in May this year, which brings together quality patient care, education and research.



5. The second recipient for this category is Associate Professor Terrance Chua, Deputy Medical Director of the National Heart Centre Singapore (NHCS). Associate Professor Chua is a trailblazer in the field of nuclear cardiology, a non-invasive test for the assessment of heart function and blood flow. Under his stewardship, nuclear cardiology at the NHCS has grown to be among the highest cardiac nuclear imaging volume centres in the world, with over 9,000 tests performed each year.

*National Outstanding Clinician Scientist Award*

6. Associate Professor Yeoh Khay Guan, Senior Consultant from the National University Hospital (NUH) and Dean of Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSOM), National University of Singapore (NUS), is this year's recipient for the National Outstanding Clinician Scientist Award. The Singapore Gastric Cancer Consortium, which he leads, has done ground-breaking research in the early detection and genomic profiling of gastric cancer, one of the top killers in Singapore. The consortium was awarded the first Translational and Clinical Research (TCR) Flagship Grant by the National Medical Research Council (NMRC) and successfully renewed its award this year.

*National Outstanding Clinician Mentor Award*

7. This year, the National Outstanding Clinician Mentor Award goes to Associate Professor Quah Thuan Chong, Head, Division of Paediatric Haematology Oncology, Department of Paediatrics, NUH. He pioneered the Clinical Fellowship Programme in Paediatric Oncology that has since benefited numerous clinical fellows from countries such as Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam and Indonesia. Building on that success, he went on to spearhead the development of a structured two-year training programme, which was endorsed by the College in Paediatrics and Child Health to become a sub-specialty Diploma, training up many young paediatricians. He has mentored and guided a generation of Paediatricians as well as Clinician-Scientists such as A/Prof Daniel Goh, A/Prof Allen Yeoh, Dr Tan Poh Lin, and Dr Koh Pei Lin, who have all gone on to serve with distinction at the NUH, as well as in public service.



Ministry of Health, Singapore  
College of Medicine Building  
16 College Road  
Singapore 169854  
TEL (65) 6325 9220  
FAX (65) 6224 1677  
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### National Outstanding Clinician Educator Award

8. There are two recipients in this award category this year – Dr Koo Wen Hsin, Deputy Director of the National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS), and Associate Professor Shirley Ooi, Designated Institutional Official from NUH. Dr Koo contributed significantly to the growth of medical oncology at NCCS, through the setting up of many new educational, upgrading and training programmes. He has been instrumental in grooming many young oncologists to win international awards and get their research published in high impact factor journals. His contributions in education is not just for doctors, but also oncology nurses as he regularly lectures for the Master of Nursing Course at NUS, and palliative courses at Singapore Hospice Council.

9. A/Prof Ooi undertakes many roles – a prolific writer who has co-edited many books, including the “Guide to the Essentials in Emergency Medicine”, which has sold more than 13,000 copies worldwide; a senior clinician who continues to be an active Emergency Medicine senior consultant; a teacher who clocks over 200 hours of teaching each year as an appointed core faculty in the NUHS Emergency Medicine Programme; and a talented administrator who has successfully implemented various specialty programmes.

### National Outstanding Clinical Quality Activist Award

10. Associate Professor Quek Swee Chye, Deputy Chairman Medical Board of the National University Hospital (NUH), is the champion of quality improvement and patient safety at NUH. He has spearheaded many innovative clinical improvement programmes over the years, which were later shared with other healthcare institutions. Under his strong leadership, NUH became the first hospital in the region to achieve the new Academic Medical Centre standards, the “Gold Seal” accreditation, awarded by the Joint Commission International (JCI) this year.

### National Clinical Excellence Team Award



Ministry of Health, Singapore  
College of Medicine Building  
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11. The NUH team led by Associate Professor Dale Fisher, Senior Consultant in Infectious Disease and Clinical Director of Medicine, is awarded the National Clinical Excellence Team Award this year. His team members include Associate Professor Raymond Lin, Senior Consultant from the Department of Laboratory Medicine, Ms Catherin Teo, Nurse Clinician in Infection Control, and Ms Lisa Ang, from the Corporate Communications Department. Their award-winning project on reducing Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infection rates in NUH has yielded impressive and sustained results, with significant drops in infections. The use of active surveillance to identify ward-based acquisition, audits and novel hand hygiene publicity campaigns have led to a stronger culture of infection control at NUH and vastly improved patient safety, outcomes and clinical standards.

12. The full citations of the winners can be found in Annex A and the fact sheet on NMEA can be found in Annex B.



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WEB [www.moh.gov.sg](http://www.moh.gov.sg)

**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN AWARD 2013**

**PROFESSOR FONG KOK YONG**

Singapore General Hospital  
Medical Board and Department of Rheumatology & Immunology

***“For his extraordinary contributions in the development of rheumatology and immense dedication towards advancing safety and quality of patient care in Singapore”***

Professor Fong Kok Yong is Chairman, Medical Board (CMB), and Senior Consultant with the Department of Rheumatology & Immunology at the Singapore General Hospital (SGH); Group Director for Medical at SingHealth; Professor and Senior Associate Dean of the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School and Adjunct Professor, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

Professor Fong stands head and shoulders above his peers in playing a pivotal role in advocating and advancing better treatment and care for patients through new and effective methods of delivery, research and education.

For instance, one of the things Professor Fong introduced when he joined SGH 10 years ago was the concept of a nurse clinician-and-educator as an integral member of the rheumatology care team. That was a novel idea but his intention was clear: to enhance patient care. His foresight proved correct. Today, the nurse clinician is an important and accepted presence in many multidisciplinary clinics, augmenting the work of clinicians to deliver better care.

More recently, Professor Fong takes the vision of excellent patient care one step further with the establishment of the Autoimmunity and Rheumatology Centre in SGH in May this year that brings together quality patient care, education and research under one roof.

His many academic appointments underscore this commitment to his younger colleagues. He recognises that if senior clinicians like him do not impart their valuable clinical skills



and knowledge, quality patient care may be compromised. That is why he remains passionate and very involved in teaching, mentoring and grooming younger colleagues in the fields of internal medicine and rheumatology.

In addition to clinical skills and knowledge, Professor Fong also stresses the importance of helping clinicians pick up good values.

He said: “Taking personal responsibility for our patients is of supreme importance. Medicine is not a nine-to-five job, where you can forget your patients once you hand over (your duties) to the night shift. For very ill patients, if needed, the least you could do is to call back to check. Yes, it does add stress to your personal life, but we are personally accountable to our patients, who have entrusted their well-being to our hands.”

It was perhaps that sense of accountability, which prompted Professor Fong to venture into research to better understand, diagnose and treat diseases afflicting his patients. He is an accomplished researcher with more than 100 scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals to his name.

Under his leadership as Acting Chairman of SGH research division, Professor Fong doubled the number of trials that the SGH Clinical Trials and Resource Centre can support, within the span of three years. When he was SingHealth Group Director for Clinical Research, he successfully co-ordinated the application of a five-year, \$10 million research infrastructure grant to set up the SingHealth Investigational Medicine Unit on SGH Campus in 2010. Professor Fong’s visionary leadership also saw to the implementation of the Medicine Academic Clinical Program (ACP) aimed at furthering research and teaching.

When he assumed office as CMB last November, he lost no time in engaging staff to find out their concerns and to rally them on as they work under myriad challenges. One of these groups was the Service Quality team whom he felt played an important but sometimes under-appreciated role in bridging between patients and clinicians.



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For his extraordinary contributions in the development of rheumatology and immense dedication towards advancing safety and quality of patient care in Singapore, Professor Fong Kok Yong is awarded the National Outstanding Clinician Award 2013.



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**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN AWARD 2013**  
**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TERRANCE CHUA**  
National Heart Centre Singapore  
Department of Cardiology

***“For his outstanding contributions and extraordinary dedication in advancing the growth and development of nuclear cardiology in Singapore over the past 20 years”***

Associate Professor Terrance Chua is currently the Deputy Medical Director and Senior Consultant, Department of Cardiology at the National Heart Centre Singapore (NHCS).

Assoc Prof Chua’s main clinical contribution has been in cardiac imaging, particularly nuclear cardiology, a specialised non-invasive test for assessment of heart function and blood flow, which helps in diagnosis, prognostication and decision-making in heart disease. He established Singapore’s first cardiac-dedicated nuclear imaging laboratory in 1994, in collaboration with SGH’s department of nuclear medicine. Under his stewardship, nuclear cardiology at NHCS has grown to be among the highest cardiac nuclear imaging volume centres in the world, with over 9,000 tests performed each year. He helped to organise many workshops in the region and successfully engaged and attracted young doctors to this less popular subspecialty. Today, demand for nuclear cardiac scans has grown rapidly, with nuclear cardiology becoming available in many of our public hospitals. Assoc Prof Chua also collaborated with his radiology colleagues to develop cardiac computed tomography services at NHCS.

To many of his patients and colleagues, Assoc Prof Chua is an epitome of humility and commitment. He is routinely seen checking on his patients on Sundays and public holidays. A believer in quality improvement, Assoc Prof Chua’s belief in quality improvement is evidenced by the many initiatives to improve the delivery of cardiac care. These included a fast-track priority appointment system for patients with symptoms suggestive of heart disease; and regular teaching sessions for primary care doctors to facilitate right siting of care. His selfless dedication and genuine care for the patients won him numerous service quality awards and the prestigious Healthcare Humanity Award in 2005.

A strong advocate of training and education, Assoc Prof Chua enjoys mentoring junior doctors and young specialists, and has been the chair of specialist training for cardiology



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at MOH since 2007. He established the diploma in cardiology with the Academy of Medicine, Singapore, which enables selected doctors, including those from non-traditional sources to undergo further training and work under supervision in public hospitals. His staunch commitment earned him one of the top five medical mentors in the SingHealth's annual junior doctor survey in 2005.

Assoc Prof Chua's passion in Academic Medicine sees his involvement supporting the Singapore Cardiac Data Bank, which collects data from all public hospitals on selected heart procedures and conditions. He contributes actively to clinical trials, has many publications in scientific and medical literature and is also on the editorial board of the Journal of Nuclear Cardiology, as well as the European Journal of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging. Assoc Prof Chua is also a role model for nurturing and attracting research talents.

With experience spanning 30 years, Assoc Prof Chua is well regarded both locally and internationally. As the Deputy Group Director, Medical at SingHealth, he is an important driver in the transformation of SingHealth's medical services to develop seamless multidisciplinary care, with a view to improving patient outcomes and experience. In addition, he is the chairman of the Singapore Heart Foundation, the Review Committee for Cardiology and Cardiothoracic Surgery Services, MOH, as well as the SAF Cardiology Specialist Advisory Board.

For his outstanding contributions and extraordinary dedication in advancing the growth and development of nuclear cardiology in Singapore over the past 20 years, Assoc Prof Terrance Chua is awarded the National Outstanding Clinician Award 2013.



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## NATIONAL OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN SCIENTIST AWARD 2013

### ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR YEOH KHAY GUAN

National University Hospital  
Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology  
&  
National University Health System  
NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine  
Department of Medicine

***“For outstanding contributions and achievements in research in the field of gastric cancer, in improving patient outcomes and achieving better understanding of the disease”***

Associate Professor Yeoh Khay Guan is a pioneering clinician-scientist, an accomplished gastroenterologist and a dedicated educator and mentor. His research translates scientific discoveries into clinical applications, improving outcomes for patients.

A/Prof Yeoh leads the Singapore Gastric Cancer Consortium (SGCC), which is carrying out research to improve the early detection and treatment of gastric cancer - the second leading cause of cancer death worldwide. The group brings together clinicians from various hospitals to join forces with scientists from the local universities and research institutes. The consortium was awarded the first national Translational and Clinical Research (TCR) Flagship Programme by the NMRC, and successfully renewed its grant award this year.

Under his leadership, the team has made ground-breaking research findings in the early detection and genomic profiling of gastric cancer. Research by his team demonstrated that endoscopic screening is able to successfully detect early gastric cancer. By detecting stomach cancer at Stage 0 to 1, patients' lives are saved and cure is made possible by minimal surgery, avoiding the complications of major surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. In collaboration with other scientists in his team he has also pioneered new imaging methods and biomarkers for better detection of early gastric cancer. The group has successfully attracted international collaboration from overseas universities and academic centres, leading pharmaceutical companies and industry. The achievements of



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the consortium have made Singapore and A/Prof Yeoh one of the thought leaders in gastric cancer internationally.

A/Prof Yeoh's work enjoys international recognition and he is widely cited for his work in gastric cancer. He has published over 120 papers in international peer-reviewed journals, including many leading medical and scientific journals, and has received many international awards for his research. Besides gastric cancer research, he has made many research contributions in the areas of gastrointestinal bleeding and colorectal cancer screening.

As Dean of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, Prof Yeoh oversees the curriculum and training of medical students to be the next generation of doctors. He has also nurtured and mentored many clinician educators and clinician scientists in NUHS. He serves on several national committees for medical research and training, and he is also a member of the NMRC Board as well as the MOH Specialists Accreditation Board and Specialist Training Committee for Gastroenterology.

For his outstanding contributions and achievements in research in the field of gastric cancer, in improving patient outcomes and achieving better understanding of the disease, Associate Professor Yeoh Khay Guan is awarded the 2013 National Outstanding Clinician Scientist Award.



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## NATIONAL OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN MENTOR 2013

### ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR QUAH THUAN CHONG

National University Hospital  
Division of Paediatric Haematology-Oncology

***“For his outstanding contributions, mentorship and leadership in raising the next generation of paediatricians in Singapore and the region”***

Associate Professor Quah Thuan Chong is Head and Senior Consultant of the Division of Paediatric Haematology-Oncology, Khoo Teck Puat-National University Children’s Medical Institute at the National University Hospital.

A/Prof Quah has learned much from his beloved mentor, the late Professor Wong Hock Boon, to be an all-round paediatrician, and to have a life-long hunger for learning – not only in paediatrics or medicine, but in all areas of life. He has tried to instill this love of learning in his students and young doctors, not only in Singapore but also beyond. He has maintained regular contact with a group of young paediatric oncologists from the Asean region and other parts of the world, sending them regular updates on important topics and answering their questions on patient care.

He pioneered the Clinical Fellowship Programme in Paediatric Oncology that has since benefited numerous clinical fellows from the region, such as Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam and Indonesia. Following the success of the Programme, he went on to spearhead the development of a structured two-year training programme to complement the one-year clinical fellowship. This programme eventually became the second paediatric sub-specialty Diploma endorsed by the College in Paediatrics and Child Health, Academy of Medicine Singapore.

Closer to home, A/Prof Quah has mentored and guided a generation of Paediatricians as well as Clinician-Scientists such as A/Prof Daniel Goh, A/Prof Allen Yeoh, Dr Tan Poh Lin, and Dr Koh Pei Lin, who have all gone on to serve with distinction at the NUH, as well as in public service.



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As a teacher, A/Prof Quah loves to see young enthusiastic students and doctors. His door is always open to them. He, himself, being always on a learning journey, is patient with all and encourages those he mentors to love whatever topic they are involved in, and so promote self-directed learning.

A/Prof Quah is adept in creating the perfect learning environment for his students where research and learning is encouraged. He is an educator who does not discriminate the intellectual capabilities or cultural differences of his student, but only emphasizes on the positive qualities and motivation level of the individual.

Many medical students and young doctors have found it refreshing and helpful to learn from A/Prof Quah who taught them to look at the clinical problems from a broad perspective, including historical and social aspects, and at the same time to apply scientific knowledge to understand the patients' problems.

A/Prof Quah was involved in significant clinical programmes such as Singapore's first bone marrow transplant. As the Head of the Division of Paediatric Haematology-Oncology at NUH, A/Prof Quah has led both hospital and Singapore teams to initiate international collaborations, one of which is the MASPORE clinical trials which resulted in significant improvement in the cure rates for children with acute lymphoblastic and myeloid leukaemia. He is very proud of his team (he calls them his A-team) in the Division of Paediatric Hematology-Oncology, and how all the members work with one heart and one mind to complement one another, so that they can together give their patients their best.

In more recent years, with the changing landscape in medical education, both undergraduate and postgraduate, he has reminded the younger generation that the practice of medicine should always be focused on the patients and families, and that they should never lose their common sense and their first love (for their patients).

For his outstanding contributions, mentorship and leadership in raising the next generation of paediatricians in Singapore and the region, A/Prof Quah Thuan Chong is awarded the National Outstanding Clinician Mentor 2013 Award.



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# NATIONAL OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN EDUCATOR AWARD 2013

## DR KOO WEN HSIN

National Cancer Centre Singapore  
Division of Medical Oncology

***“For his outstanding leadership and dedication in developing medical education in the area of medical oncology”***

Dr Koo Wen Hsin is the Deputy Director and Senior Consultant (Division of Medical Oncology) at the National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS), as well as the Associate Programme Director for Singhealth Internal Medicine residency and Singhealth Group Director for Education. Dr Koo also holds academic positions in the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School and the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at the National University of Singapore.

As the Singhealth Group Director for Education, Dr Koo had set up the Academic Medicine Education Institute (AMEI), which will help transform Singapore into an international education hub for medical education. As the chairman for the Medical Oncology Specialist Training Committee for several years, he successfully guided the various institutions in transiting to senior residency in medical oncology. His ability to strategize and his collaborative style improved educational activities in the campus across all levels. It is also with this same collaborative spirit that Dr Koo helped set up and provided oncologic training to physicians at Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Changi General Hospital and KKH Women’s and Children’s Hospital.

Dr Koo has contributed outstandingly to not only the growth of medical oncology at the National Cancer Centre Singapore, but also initiated many new educational programmes for the upgrading and training for those in the medical profession. He played a pivotal role in revamping the education and creating an environment that is conducive for learning. He appreciates diverse views and empowers those mentored him the freedom and opportunities to grow and express themselves.

Affectionately referred to as “Grand Master” by his peers and juniors in NCCS, Dr Koo has been instrumental in grooming a succession of oncologists to further their specialist skills



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by not just taking on research projects and getting them published in high impact factor journals, but also in winning international awards. His lectures at Duke-NUS GMS are often the best attended and exceptionally highly-rated. Students have been nominating him for the Outstanding Faculty for Learning for at least three consecutive years. He was also nominated by the graduating class to perform the hooding ceremony not once, but twice.

His role in education is not just for doctors. He also plays an active role in the education of oncology nurses and lecturers for the Master of Nursing Course at NUS and the Palliative courses at Singapore Hospice Council. Yet despite his busy schedule he still found time to volunteer with the Singapore Cancer Society and is the society's chairman for many years. He is a believer in lifelong learning and embarked on several courses with his latest addition an Executive MBA from the Singapore Management University (SMU). This is on top of running clinics and going for his ward rounds.

He often reminded his students that a doctor is more than just to cure the sick, and is more accurately, to treat them – fellow human beings who need compassion and love. He leads by example, attending the wakes of patients who have passed on, offering comfort to the family members. Dr Koo is indeed an inspiration for all in the medical profession.

For his distinguished and outstanding contributions in developing medical education for doctors and nurses in the area of medical oncology and for the future development of Singapore, Dr Koo Wen Hsin is awarded the National Outstanding Clinician Educator Award at the NMEA 2013.



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FAX (65) 6224 1677  
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**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN EDUCATOR 2013  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SHIRLEY OOI**

National University Hospital  
Emergency Medicine Department

***“For her outstanding and immense contribution in nurturing and shaping future medical leaders, and the development of the field of Emergency Medicine Education in Singapore”***

Associate Professor Shirley Ooi is a Senior Consultant and former Head of the Emergency Medicine Department (EMD) at the National University Hospital (NUH). She is an Associate Professor with the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSOM), Designated Institutional Official (DIO) of the National University Health System (NUHS) Residency Program and also an Adjunct Professor at the University Kebangsaan Malaysia Department of Emergency Medicine.

Apart from being a respected Emergency Medicine (EM) physician, who had also won as a team member, the National Medical Excellence Team Award in 2011 for her contribution in reducing median door-to-door balloon time for ST elevation myocardial infarction patients presenting at the EMD, A/Prof Ooi is a passionate educator.

She was the Director of Postgraduate Education in the EMD at NUH for a decade (1997 - 2006), and took on the role of DIO of the NUHS Residency Program in 2009. As the DIO of the NUHS Residency Program, A/Prof Ooi is instrumental in the implementation of the various specialty programs and the success of the ACGME-International accreditation of all its 14 programs. Under her leadership, a further 10 programs has been rolled out on 1 July 2013.

At the national level, A/Prof Ooi was the former Chair of the EM Specialist Training Committee (STC) from 2009 to 2011, and a current member of the Joint Committee on Specialist Training (JCST), Specialist Accreditation Board (SAB), Medical Undergraduate and House Officers Training Committee (MUHO) as well as the YLLSOM Outcomes Definition and Curriculum Rationalisation Task Force.



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As one of the pioneers of EM in Singapore, A/P Ooi played a key role in advancing EM as a specialty here. She spearheaded the introduction of a structured 2-year National Combined EM Advanced Specialist Training (AST) programme in 2005 and a structured AST exit examinations in 2009.

A prolific writer, A/Prof Ooi has contributed chapters in overseas EM textbooks and written/co-edited three books to share her knowledge on EM, including the *Guide to the Essentials in Emergency Medicine* which has sold more than 13,000 copies internationally. This book has had nine reprints and a second edition will be published later this year.

A passionate academia at heart, A/Prof Ooi is active in research and has published more than 30 peer-reviewed journal articles. She was a long-serving member of the Singapore Medical Journal editorial board, and is active in several other editorial boards. Her work in research has also garnered her several international research awards.

Balancing her role as a senior clinician educator-administrator, A/Prof Ooi continues to be an active EM senior consultant, and clinical teacher. She ensures she continues to contribute to ground level teaching and is appointed core faculty in the NUHS EM Residency Program. She clocks over 200 hours of scheduled teaching (excluding bedside supervision) each year and her students include local and international medical undergrads, trainees/residents, nurses and non-trainee medical officers.

Her passion and contributions towards medical education is evident from the numerous teaching/mentoring accolades and awards won over the years, the many invitations to teach locally and internationally, as well as number of elective medical students who apply to be mentored by the veteran practitioner.

An advocate of Evidence-based Medicine (EBM), A/Prof Ooi has played a major role in promoting EBM to the region through the organisation of the annual Asia Pacific



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Evidence-Based Medicine and Nursing Workshop and Conference since its inception in 2003.

For her outstanding and immense contribution in nurturing and shaping future medical leaders, and the development of the field of Emergency Medicine Education in Singapore, Associate Professor Shirley Ooi is awarded the 2013 National Outstanding Clinician Educator Award.



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## NATIONAL OUTSTANDING CLINICAL QUALITY ACTIVIST 2013

### ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR QUEK SWEE CHYE

National University Hospital  
Division of Paediatric Cardiology

***“For his distinguished and outstanding achievements as a leader, teacher and clinician in the development of Quality Improvement and Paediatrics (Cardiology)”***

Associate Professor Quek Swee Chye is the champion of quality improvement and patient safety at the National University Hospital (NUH). Over the years, he has spearheaded significant and innovative clinical improvement programmes that were later shared with other healthcare institutions, resulting in increased productivity and patient safety.

A/Prof Quek is chair of the Clinical Directors’ and Continuous Quality Improvement committees at NUH. As the hospital’s Deputy Chairman of the Medical Board, he oversees work processes and improvements in clinical quality and patient safety to ensure patients receive the best possible care.

Under A/Prof Quek’s strong leadership, NUH became the first hospital in Singapore to receive the Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation in 2004. This year, he once again led us to become the first hospital in Singapore and the region to achieve the new Academic Medical Centre standards, the “Gold Seal” accreditation, newly introduced by the JCI.

A/Prof Quek also serves as a Visiting Senior Consultant to the Standards and Quality Improvement Division at the Ministry of Health since April 2008, where he contributes to quality improvement and patient safety on a broader front.

He is credited with being instrumental in driving the use of clinical indicators and benchmarking in Singapore. Under A/Prof Quek’s initiative, NUH became the first hospital in Singapore to publish its clinical indicators on its website in 2006. This set the stage for the Singapore public to access healthcare indicators, which was useful not just for public’s benefit, but also essential in helping clinicians drive many areas of improvements of patient safety and clinical care within their own practice.



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As a clinician, A/Prof Quek is well known both locally and overseas as a respected paediatric cardiologist. He heads and oversees the paediatric cardiology program at the National University Hospital. His work has been published extensively in peer reviewed journals, and he has been invited to speak at many scientific international conferences. He is a reviewer for reputable international journals including Heart, International Journal of Cardiology, and our own local Annals of Academy of Medicine. For several years now, A/Prof Quek has been invited to serve as a reviewer of abstracts for BMJ's International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare.

As much as he is passionate about teaching medical students and young doctors paediatrics and cardiology, he also trains clinicians in the methodology of quality improvement, which has resulted in projects that have achieved national and international awards. In March this year, A/Prof Quek became the first Singaporean to be invited by the American College of Cardiology to serve as its Council Member in the Adult and Paediatric Cardiology section, and in April 2013, he was awarded the inaugural NUHS Pinnacle Award for Clinical Excellence in April 2013.

For his distinguished and outstanding achievements as a leader, teacher and clinician in the development of Quality Improvement and Patient Safety, Associate Professor Quek Swee Chye is awarded the 2013 National Outstanding Clinical Quality Activist Award.



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TEL (65) 6325 9220  
FAX (65) 6224 1677  
WEB [www.moh.gov.sg](http://www.moh.gov.sg)

## NATIONAL CLINICAL EXCELLENCE TEAM AWARD 2013

National University Hospital

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DALE FISHER**  
Division of Infectious Diseases

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR RAYMOND LIN**  
Department of Laboratory Medicine

**CATHRINE TEO**  
Department of Nursing, Infection Control

**LISA ANG**  
Corporate Communications Department

***“For their outstanding contributions in reducing methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infection rates, leading to improved patient safety, outcomes and clinical standards”***

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is endemic in hospitals in Singapore and worldwide. Colonisation with MRSA is a risk factor for subsequent clinical infection and the burden of MRSA is heavy.

A team headed by Associate Professor Dale Fisher was formed in 2006 to look for a complete solution to deal with MRSA infections in the National University Hospital (NUH). It has been instrumental in spearheading several initiatives and MRSA control measures, including active surveillance to identify ward-based acquisition, audits and novel hand hygiene publicity campaigns to reduce MRSA infection rates in the hospital. By working closely with bed management and ward staff, all identified patients at NUH with MRSA colonisation or infection are isolated or cohorted. This “MRSA bundle of interventions” took three years to roll out hospital wide.

As the programme was rolled out in a sustainable and acceptable way, MRSA acquisitions began falling. There was also a significant drop in bacteremias, and other clinical infections, while the hospital’s hand hygiene compliance rate rose significantly. The team successfully oversaw change across the hospital, while continuing all the usual



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and necessary hospital infection control efforts. Awareness on the importance of hand hygiene in saving lives was raised amongst staff, patients, visitors and the general public through innovative efforts such as a hand hygiene mascot, display of a replica of a patient's bed showing areas where germs are present, a large external banner on the hospital façade, a video featuring real stories of patients and families who have been affected by MRSA, and a series of posters and comic strips to reinforce the message. The team had just completed its third bi-annual staff hand hygiene training and credentialing involving over 6,000 staff in a week.

Efforts towards prevention of MRSA acquisition and infection are now embedded in the culture of clinical medicine at NUH with sustainable practices and results.

The experience and results of measures at NUH have been published in established peer-reviewed journals, and presented at both local and international conferences. It has taken major efforts from many at NUH.

For their outstanding contributions to improve patients' safety, outcomes and clinical standards by reducing MRSA infection rates, the team represented by A/Prof Dale Fisher, A/Prof Raymond Lin, Nurse Clinician Cathrine Teo, and Assistant Director Lisa Ang, of the National University Hospital, is awarded the 2013 National Clinical Excellence Team Award.



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**NMEA INFORMATION SHEET**

**About the National Medical Excellence Awards**

The National Medical Excellence Awards is a national-level award given out to recognise the efforts of clinicians, clinician scientists and other healthcare professionals for their clinical and research work. It acknowledges their contributions in advancing healthcare, improving the standards of patient safety and quality of care which ultimately improve people's lives.

**National Outstanding Clinician Award**

The National Outstanding Clinician award recognises individuals with at least 15 years of service in public or private healthcare establishments with exceptional contributions to clinical work that advances the safety and quality of patient care, and in addition has supported and facilitated research. The recipients have successfully introduced novel / effective treatment methods resulting in high standard of quality healthcare delivery and are recognized by their peers as being a master clinician. Recipients will receive a trophy, a citation and a prize of S\$10,000.

**National Outstanding Clinician Scientist Award**

The National Outstanding Clinician Scientist award recognises individuals with at least 15 years of service in public or private healthcare establishments with outstanding contributions to clinical and translational research work relating to their field of specialty. Their contributions through research work have resulted in novel understanding of diseases with potential positive outcome on healthcare delivery. Recipients will receive a trophy, a citation and a prize of S\$10,000.

**National Outstanding Clinician Mentor Award**

The National Outstanding Clinician Mentor award recognises individuals with at least 15 years of service in healthcare industry and health-related work who have contributed substantially to the training of young clinicians and clinician scientists via mentorship or by virtue of academic positions. Recipients will receive a trophy, a citation and a prize of S\$10,000.

**National Outstanding Clinician Educator Award**

The National Outstanding Clinician Educator Award recognises individuals who have contributed substantially to the training of clinicians and/or clinician scientists via mentorship or by virtue of academic positions. This award is opened to all clinicians, clinician-educators, clinician-researchers or academic researchers in public or private healthcare establishments in Singapore. Recipients will receive a trophy, a citation and a prize of S\$10,000.



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## **National Outstanding Clinical Quality Activist Award**

The National Outstanding Clinical Quality Activist award recognises individuals who have contributed significantly to clinical quality improvement and patient safety and have likewise, inspired others to do so. This is the only award that is open to all medical doctors, nurses, pharmacists and allied health professionals in the public and private healthcare sectors non-doctors. Recipients will receive a trophy, a citation and a prize of S\$10,000.

## **National Clinical Excellence Team Award**

The National Clinical Excellence Team award recognises teams or organizations that have undertaken a clinical quality / practice improvement project that succeeded in making an outstanding contribution to improving patient safety and care through exemplary innovative transfer of benefits of research, novel methods or care delivery resulting in improved standards of care, health outcomes, higher efficiency and/or more effective patient centered services. The team should demonstrate their achievements through successful population of novel care delivery services beyond the unit / ward / department. Recipients will receive a team trophy, citation and a prize of S\$10,000.



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